

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 05988 161420Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SES-02 SAA-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15
SP-02 PM-05 INRE-00 CIAE-00 NEAE-00 /036 W
-----107138 161428Z /46

O 161340Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3032
INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY SANA IMMEDIATE
CHUSMTM DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE
USMTM/DCR RIYADH IMMEDIATE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE//EC'R/7-SA//

S E C R E T JIDDA 5988

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SA, YE, US
SUBJ: SAUDI-U.S. MILITARY SUPPORT FOR YAR

REF: (A) JIDDA 5960 151555Z AUG 78
(B) JIDDA 5939 141405Z AUG 78
(C) USMTM JIDDA 121907Z AUG 78
(D) SANA 3937 121030Z AUG 78
(E) SANA 3926 111520Z AUG 78

1. SAG INTEREST IN BOLSTERING YAR DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES
SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN STIMULATED, RATHER THAN DAMPENED BY
YARG REACTION TO SAUDI-U.S. PROPOSAL ON AUGUST 11
(REF E). MIN DEF PRINCE SULTAN MADE SPECIFIC PROPPSALS
TO BG CATHEY (REF C) FOR EQUIPMENT TO BE ADDED FROM LIST
PPESENTED BY YARG (REF D) TO SAUDI-U.S. PROGRAM. KING
KHALID HIMSELF IS PREPARING LETTER FOR PRESIDENT CARTER,
MAKING SPECIFIC PROPOSALS THAT INCLUDE EVERYTHING SULTAN
ASKED FOR AND THEN SOME (REF A). MY MEETING WITH FON
MIN PRINCE SAUD ON AUGUST 15 WAS PRECEDED BY SAG MEETING
IN SAUD'S OFFICE ON THIS SUBJECT WHICH INCLUDED PRINCE

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TURKI BIN FAISAL AND LTG ALI MAJID KABBANI, WHO HAD BEEN
SENT BY PRINCE SULTAN TO SANA WITH BG CATHEY TO PRESENT
SAUDI-U.S. PROGRAM TO YARG.

2. PRINCE SAUD'S TONE IN MY MEETING WITH HIM WAS ONE OF
GREAT URGENCY, PROMPTED BY A DEEP CONCERN FOR THE VERY
SURVIVAL OF THE YAR REGIME. I SENSED A DECIDED DIFFER-

ENCE IN EMPHASIS FROM THE MEETING OF PRINCE SULTAN WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT MURRAY ON AUGUST 1 AND THE MEETING OF PRINCES SULTAN AND SAUD WITH US ON AUGUST 6, IN BOTH OF WHICH EMPHASIS WAS ENTIRELY ON EXTERNAL SITUATION. SAUD WAS BLUNT ON AUGUST 15 IN SAYING THAT KING'S LIST OF MILITARY REQUIREMENTS FOR YAR WAS DRAWN UP AS MUCH FOR INTERNAL SITUATION AS FOR EXTERNAL SITUATION. 'ABD AL-FATTAH ISMAIL REGIME IS BEING QUICKLY CONSOLIDATED IN PDRY. THIS POSES MAJOR THREAT TO YAR. IF SAUDI-U.S. ARMS PROGRAM IS NOT LARGE ENOUGH AND FAST ENOUGH, SALIH'S INTERNAL CREDIBILITY, ESPECIALLY WITH HIS MILITARY, WILL BE SERIOUSLY UNDERMINED. SAUD WAS CLEAR IN INDICATING THAT SAG WAS NOT OVERLY INTERESTED IN QUESTION OF YAR ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY. IF WE WORRY ABOUT IMPROVING ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY FIRST, EQUIPMENT WILL ARRIVE TOO LATE TO SAVE YARG. IN CONTRAST TO POSITION TAKEN BY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL HUMAID ON JULY 29 AND AUGUST 2, PRINCE TURKI AND PRINCE SAUD INDICATED THAT SAG WOULD CONSIDER TRANSFERRING SOME EQUIPMENT TO YAR FROM SAUDI ARABIA AND REPLACING SAUDI EQUIPMENT LATER IF THIS IS NECESSARY TO GET IT TO YAR FASTER. IT SEEMS CLEAR TO EMBASSY JIDDA THAT PRESIDENT SALIH HAS CONVINCED SAG THAT HE IS IN TROUBLE INTERNALLY UNLESS HE CAN SHOW THAT HE HAS VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO USSR AS SOURCE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND UNLESS HE CAN GET ENOUGH EQUIPMENT TO PRESENT REASONABLE BALANCE TO WHAT IS GOING INTO
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PDRY.

3. I UNDERSTAND THAT SAUDI-U.S. JOINT ANALYSIS OF THREAT TO YAR WILL BE COMPLETED ON AUGUST 18. I UNDERSTAND FROM CHUSMTM THAT IT IS NOT SO FAR OUT OF DATE THAT WE CANNOT TAKE SOME PRELIMINARY DECISIONS ON REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT SOUGHT BY YAR. IN FACT, CHUSMTM THINKS SURVEY COULD BE MODIFIED BY DOCUMENT UPDATE, RATHER THAN ON-THE-GROUND INSPECTION, THEREBY AVOIDING NECESSITY OF IRRITATING YARG WITH SUGGESTION OF ANOTHER SURVEY. IF U.S. ANALYSIS OF THREAT POSED TO YAR BY PDRY IS AS SERIOUS AS SAG AND NSC STAFFER SAMUEL HOSKINSON BELIEVE, I THINK WE SHOULD START MAKING SOME PRELIMINARY DECISIONS IN WASHINGTON AS TO WHAT EQUIPMENT WE CAN MAKE AVAILABLE TO YAR FROM THE LIST WHICH YARG HAS PRESENTED TO US. THIS WILL HELP USG IN HANDLING KING'S LETTER IN EXPEDITIOUS MANNER WHEN IT IS RECEIVED.

4. I AGREE WITH PRINCE SULTAN THAT WE SHOULD CAREFULLY COORDINATE USG-SAG POSITION BEFORE WE GO BACK TO YARG SO AS NOT TO DISPLAY OUR DIFFERENCES TO YARF. PRELIM-

INARY THINKING ALONG LINES INDICATED HERE WILL MAKE IT
EASIER TO COORDINATE OUR POSITIONS IN TIMELY FASHION.

5. LETTER FROM KING KHALID MUST BE GIVEN SERIOUS CON-
SIDERATION AND FAVORABLE ACTION IF POSSIBLE (SEE SEPTTEL
ON KING'S INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN FOREGN POLICY).
IF KING'S REQUEST AS CONTAINED IN LETTER HAS URGENCY
INDICATED BY SAUD AND TURKI, THAT WILL BE EVEN MORE
REASON FOR FAVORABLE USG ANSWER.
WEST

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 16 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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